

Appl. No. : 09/308,032
Filed : August 13, 1999

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments and the following remarks are responsive to the August 23, 2004 Final Office Action. Claim 3 is amended, claim 4 remains as originally filed, and claims 1, 2, and 5-11 are cancelled without prejudice. Thus, claims 3 and 4 are presented again in this submission for further consideration. Please enter the amendments and reconsider the claims in view of the following remarks.

Response to Rejection of Claims 3, 4, and 11 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

In the August 23, 2004 Final Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 3, 4, and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,311,320 to Hashimoto ("Hashimoto").

Claim 3

As described herein, Applicants have amended claim 3 to recite that "said column amplifying elements (A_j) and the common output amplifier (D) being connected by a single bus, wherein there is a further switch (X_j) between said column amplifying element (A_j) and said bus." Thus, amended claim 3 makes clear that the switches X_j are series switches between the column amplifying elements A_j and the single bus. This is contrary to the circuit illustrated in Fig. 20A of Hashimoto, where the so-called switches – the S/H circuits 12A, 13A – are located on the bus.

The switch between the common output amplifier enables the amplifying element to be switched off from the bus. This has the advantage that the output capacitance of non-operative amplifying elements is switched off from the bus. This is different from Hashimoto, where the output capacitance of the amplifiers is always connected to the bus.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants submit that amended claim 3 is patentably distinguished over Hashimoto. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 3 and to pass claim 3 to allowance.

Claim 4

Claim 4 depends from claim 3, so claim 4 includes all the limitations of claim 3, as well as other limitations of particular utility. In view of the above remarks, Applicants submit that claim 4 is patentably distinguished over Hashimoto. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 4 and to pass claim 4 to allowance.

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Claim 11

As described herein, Applicants have cancelled claim 11 without prejudice.

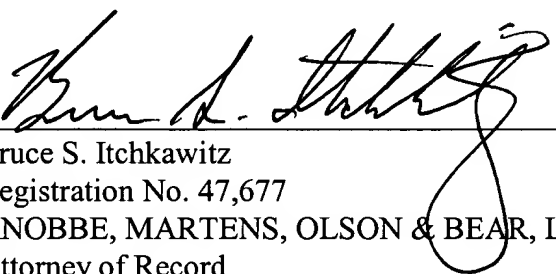
Summary

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claims 3 and 4 are in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request such action.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 11/5/04

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